

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration and allowance of this application are respectfully requested. Currently, claims 1, 4-30, 32-33 and 39 are pending in this application.

This Amendment cancels claims 31 and 37 and corrects a minor error in claim 30.

Priority Under 35 U.S.C. §119:

The final Office Action and Advisory Action both failed to acknowledge Applicant's claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. §119 and receipt of certified copies of priority documents. Applicant therefore respectfully requests that the next Office Action indicate acknowledgement of Applicant's claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. §119 and receipt of certified copies of the priority documents. The Notification of Acceptance of Application Under 35 U.S.C. §371 (Form PCT/DO/EO/903) acknowledges receipt of the priority documents.

Approval of Formal Drawings:

A Drawing Change Authorization Request was filed on February 24, 2003. A new set of formal drawings including the proposed drawing corrections of the Drawing Change Authorization Request was also filed on February 24, 2003. Applicant respectfully requests that the proposed drawing corrections and the new set of formal drawings be approved.

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January 7, 2004

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §103:

Claims 1, 4-33, 37 and 39 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 over Takeuchi (U.S. '456) in view of Dent (U.S. '878). This rejection is being appealed in the concurrently filed Appeal Brief with respect to still pending claims 1, 4-30, 32-33 and 39.

Conclusion:

Applicant believes that this entire application is in condition for allowance and respectfully requests a notice to this effect. If the Examiner has any questions or believes that an interview would further prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

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By: _____



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